

Design and Performance of a Spectrometer for Deployment on MISSE 7

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A spectrometer for reflectance and transmission measurements of samples exposed to the space environment has been developed for deployment on the Materials on the International Space Station Experiment (MISSE) 7. The instrument incorporates a miniature commercial fiber optic coupled spectrometer with a computer control system for detector operation, sample motion and illumination. A set of three spectrometers were recently integrated on the MISSE7 platform with launch and deployment on the International Space Station scheduled for summer of this year. The instrument is one of many active experiments on the platform.

The performance of the instrument prior to launch will be discussed. Data from samples measured in the laboratory will be compared to those from the instrument prior to launch. These comparisons will illustrate the capabilities of the current design.

The space environment challenges many materials. When in operation on the MISSE 7 platform, the new spectrometer will provide real time data on the how the space environment affects the optical properties of thermal control paints and optical coatings. Data obtained from comparison of pre and post flight measurements on hundreds of samples exposed on previous MISSE platforms have been reported at these meetings. With the new spectrometer and the ability to correlate measured changes with time on orbit and the occurrence of both natural events and human activities, a better understanding of the processes responsible for degradation of materials in space will be possible.

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Outline

Evolution

Design

Samples

Performance

Summary



Factors in the Space Environment Lead to Change

Atomic oxygen

Contaminants

- particulates

- surface coatings/obscuration

- chemical reactions

Solar UV

Charged particles



Spectrometers in Space?

Optical Properties Monitor (OPM)

AZ Technology and NASA MSFC

Russian MIR Space Station - 1997

8 months on exterior surface

Science Package included:

Reflectometer

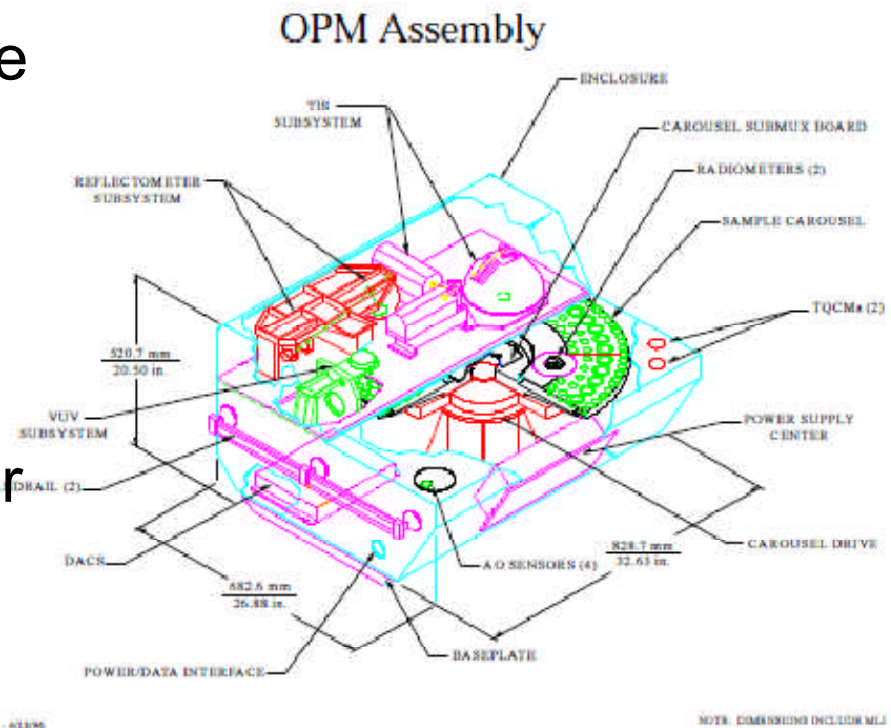
VUV Spectrometer

Total Integrated scatter

Molecular contamination monitor

Atomic oxygen monitor

Irradiance Monitor

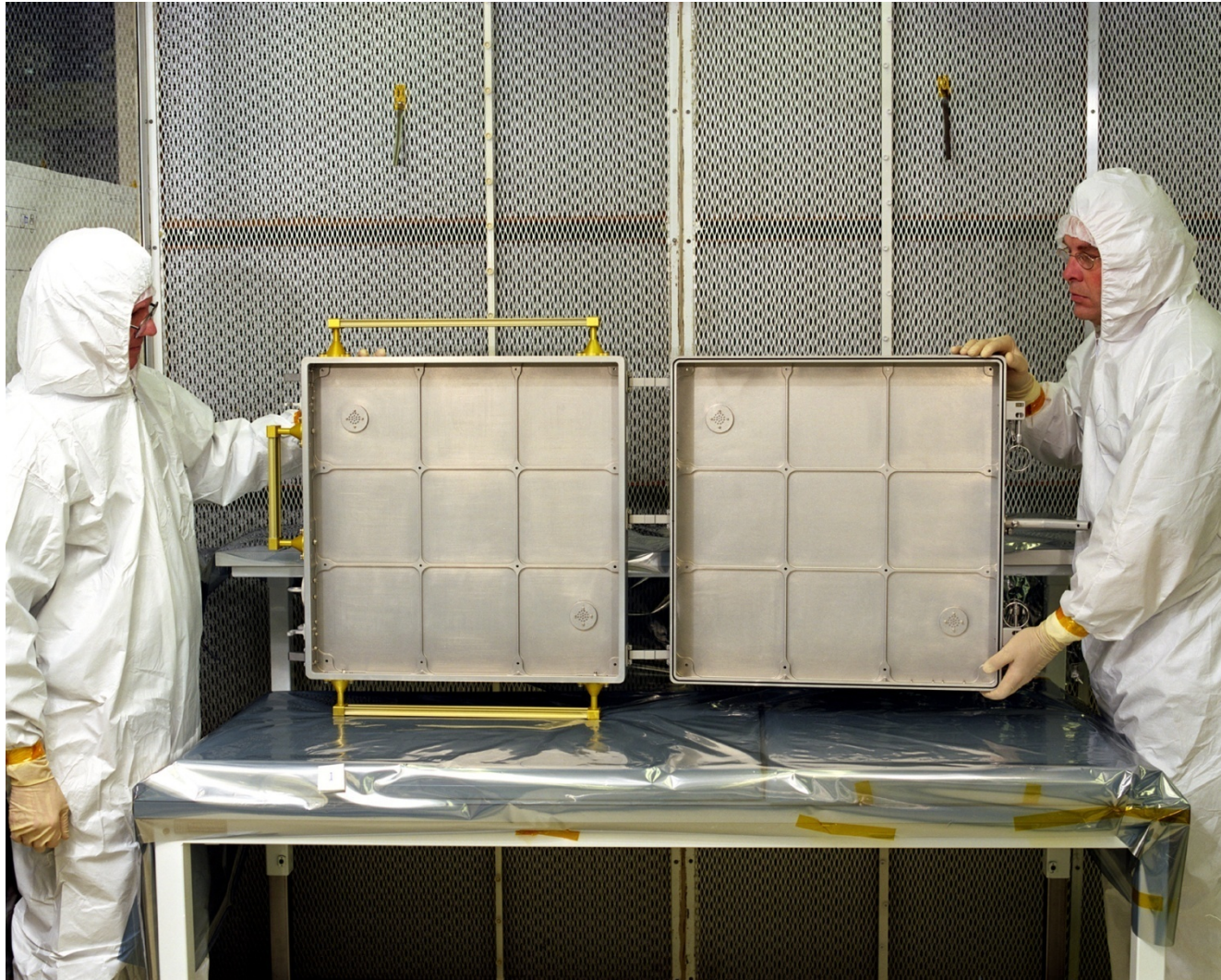


*Figure used with permission from AzTechnology



MISSE PEC

~2 ft x 2 ft
Exposure area
On each side



NASA IMAGE



The MISSE 7 PEC Layout

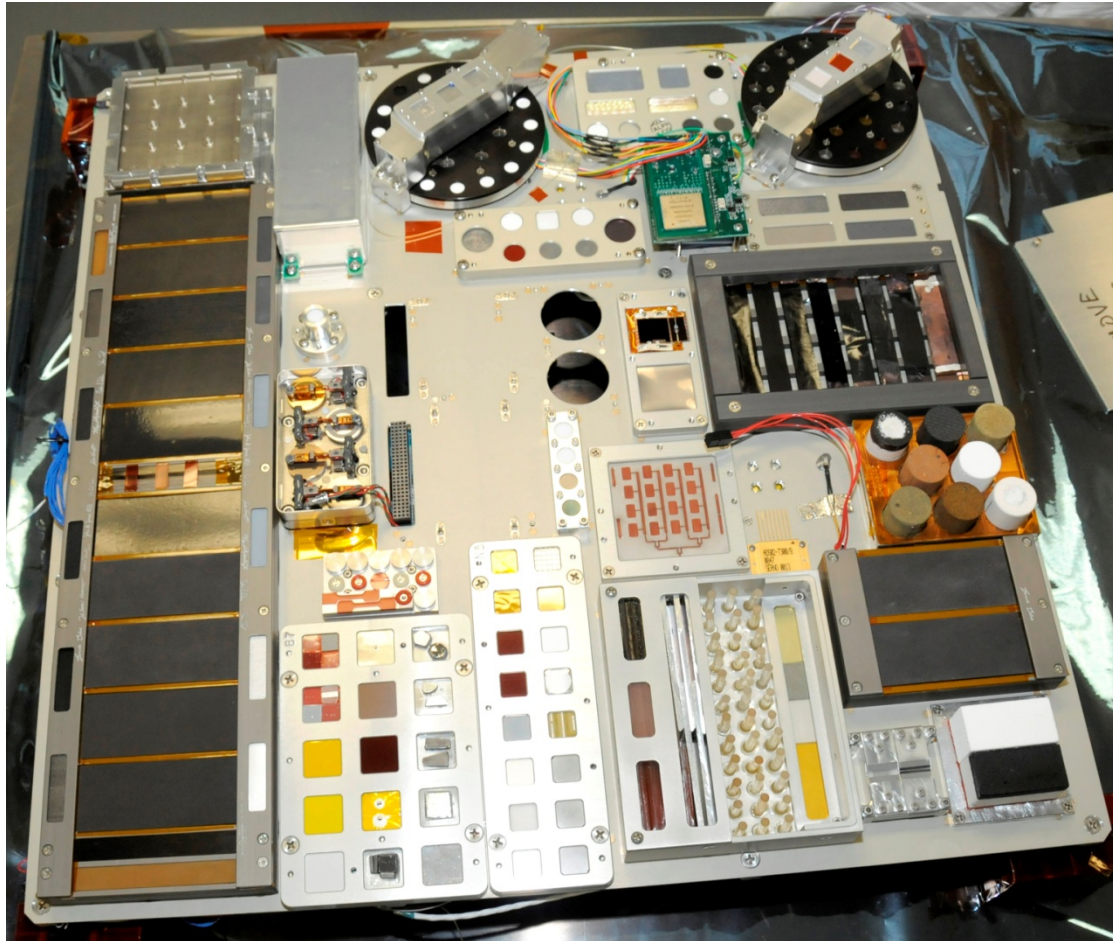
PEC baseplate is the integration platform

- System Integration, test in one phase
- Commercial computer boards used for control
 - Low power
 - Flash memory
- USB or RS-485 to all instrument packages
- System activated for measurement cycle each day
- Telemetry to ground through ISS link
- ≈ 48 experiments on the 7B platform
 - 11 active (3 spectrometers)



Baseplate
23.75" x 23.75"

PEC Layout



Ram side, exposed surface with all except one experiment installed.



Spectrophotometer Design

Commercial spectrometers used

Stellarnet BlueWave

Fiber coupled input

LED light engine

Carousel to hold samples

motor drive for rotation

positioning from Hall sensors

Reflectance and transmission configurations

Rapid measurement sequence



Stellarnet BlueWave

Commercial spectrometers

200-1050nm range, 1.6nm resolution

2000:1 dynamic range

Design uses

- holographic grating

- 2048 CCD detector

Powered from USB

Single strand 400 micron core fiber input

- 2 x UV 100micron bifurcated fibers coupled together

- SMA 905 connector

Convenient software

- detector integration time

- spectra manipulation



(25x75x125mm)



Integration is Always the Challenge

Most experiments were assembled onto both top/bottom sides of PEC baseplate

- Limited space envelope

- Experiment is separated from power/data management

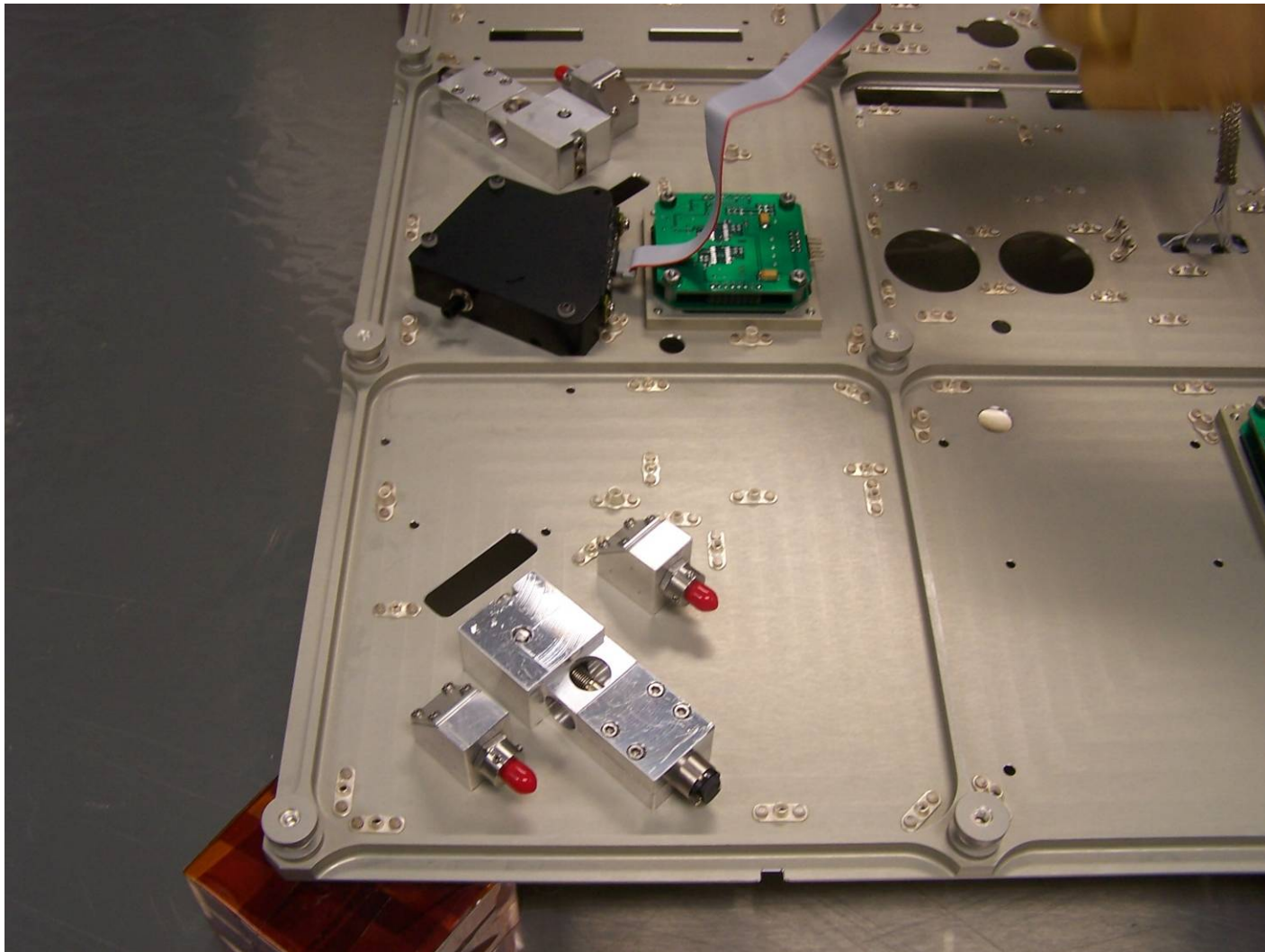
- Point-to-point for all data/control lines, fibers, power

Spectrometers were assembled on both surfaces of the PEC baseplate

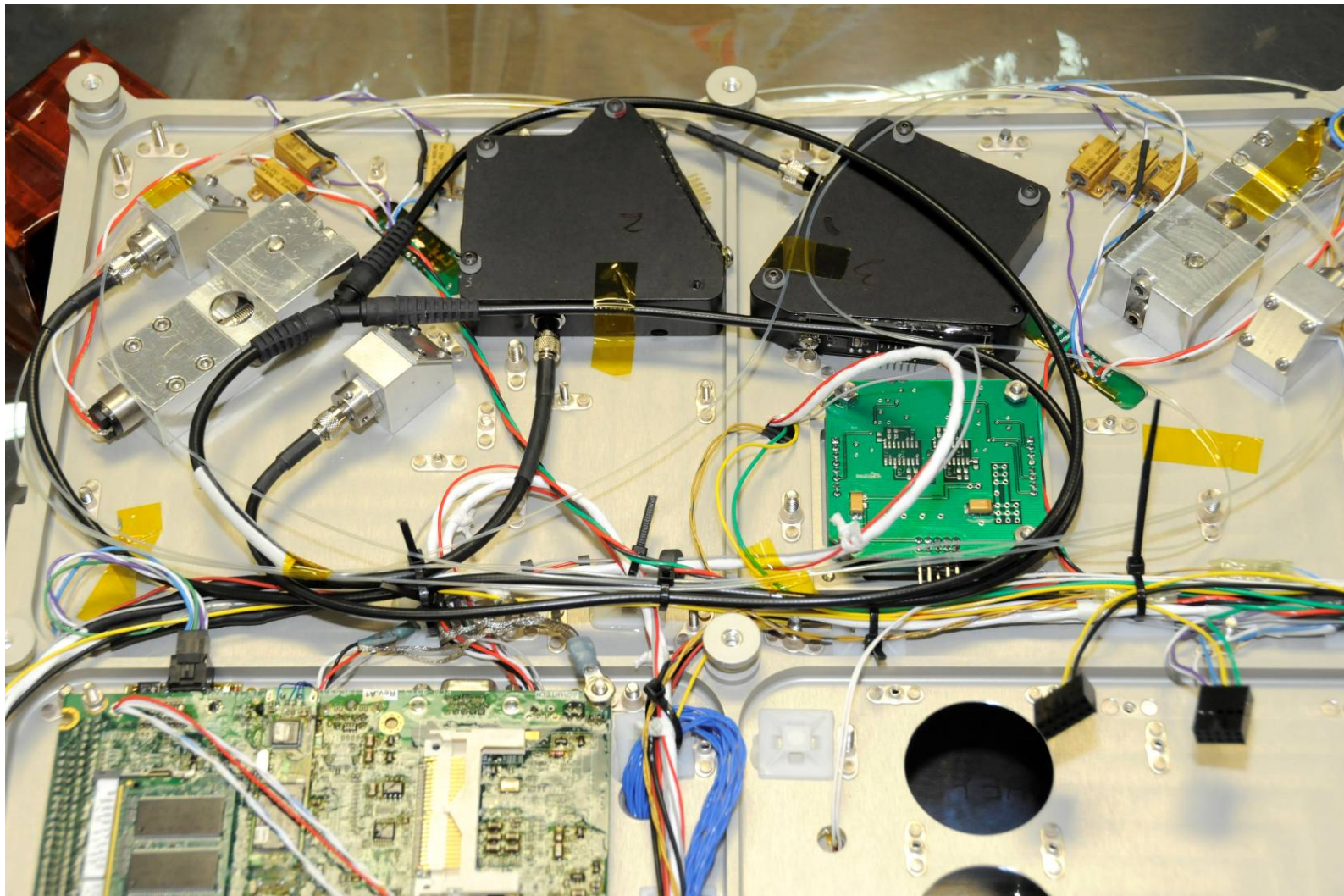
- Motors and the Bluewave spectrometer were located below the baseplate

- Optics were both above and below the baseplate





View underneath baseplate with motor, spindle, and optics installed

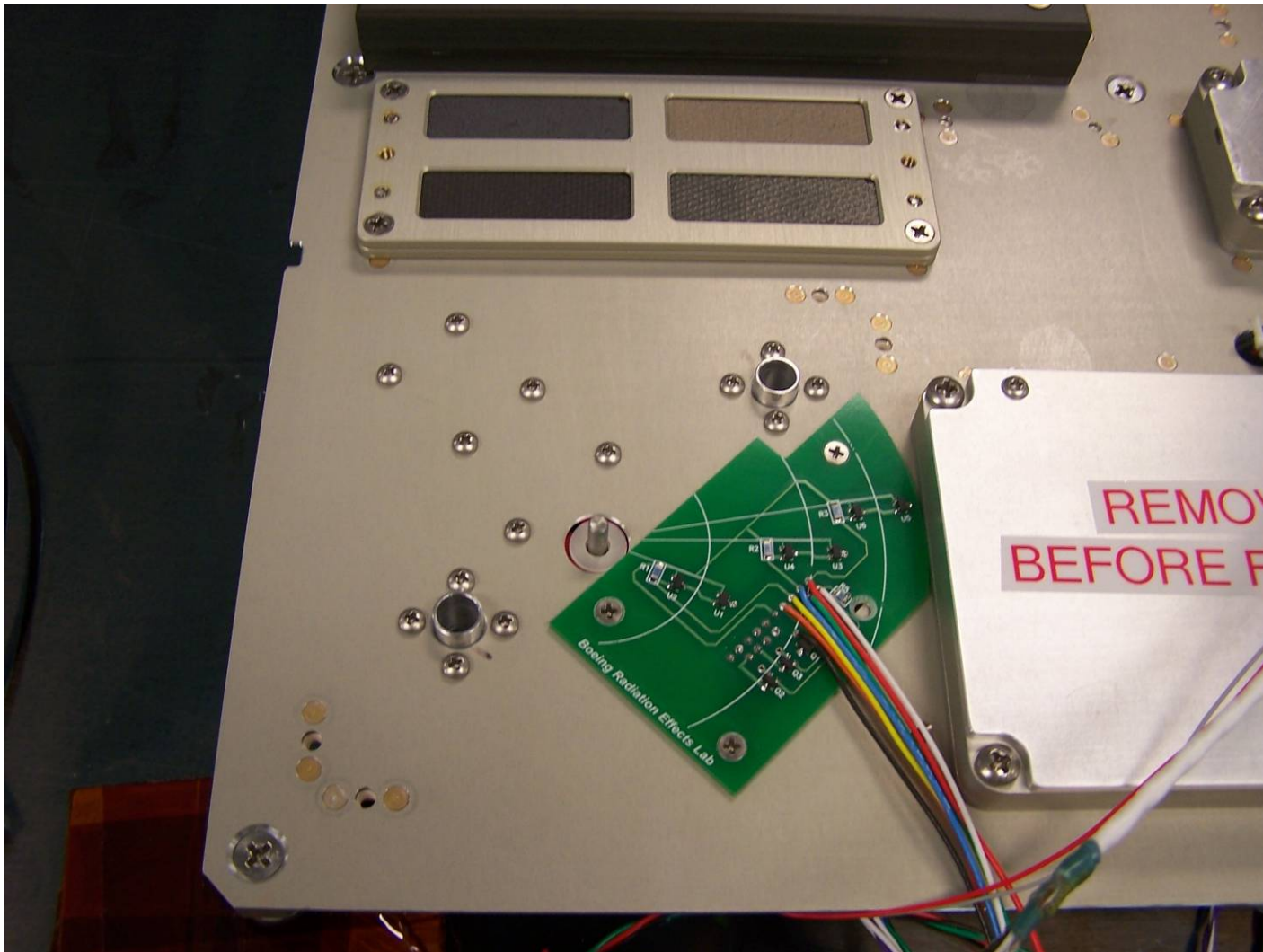


View underneath baseplate with everything installed.

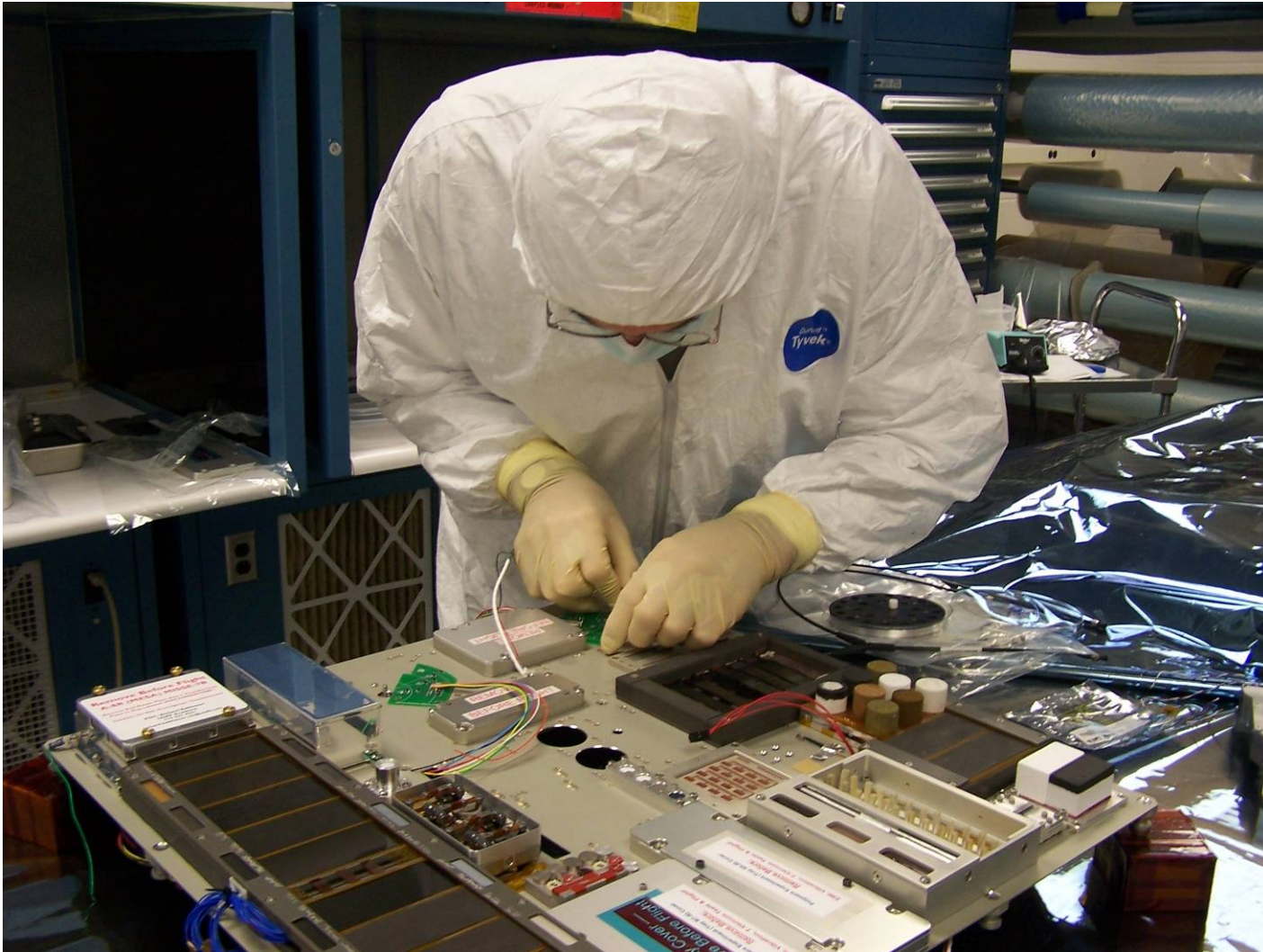


Motor, spindle, and optics installed





Positioner electronics installed

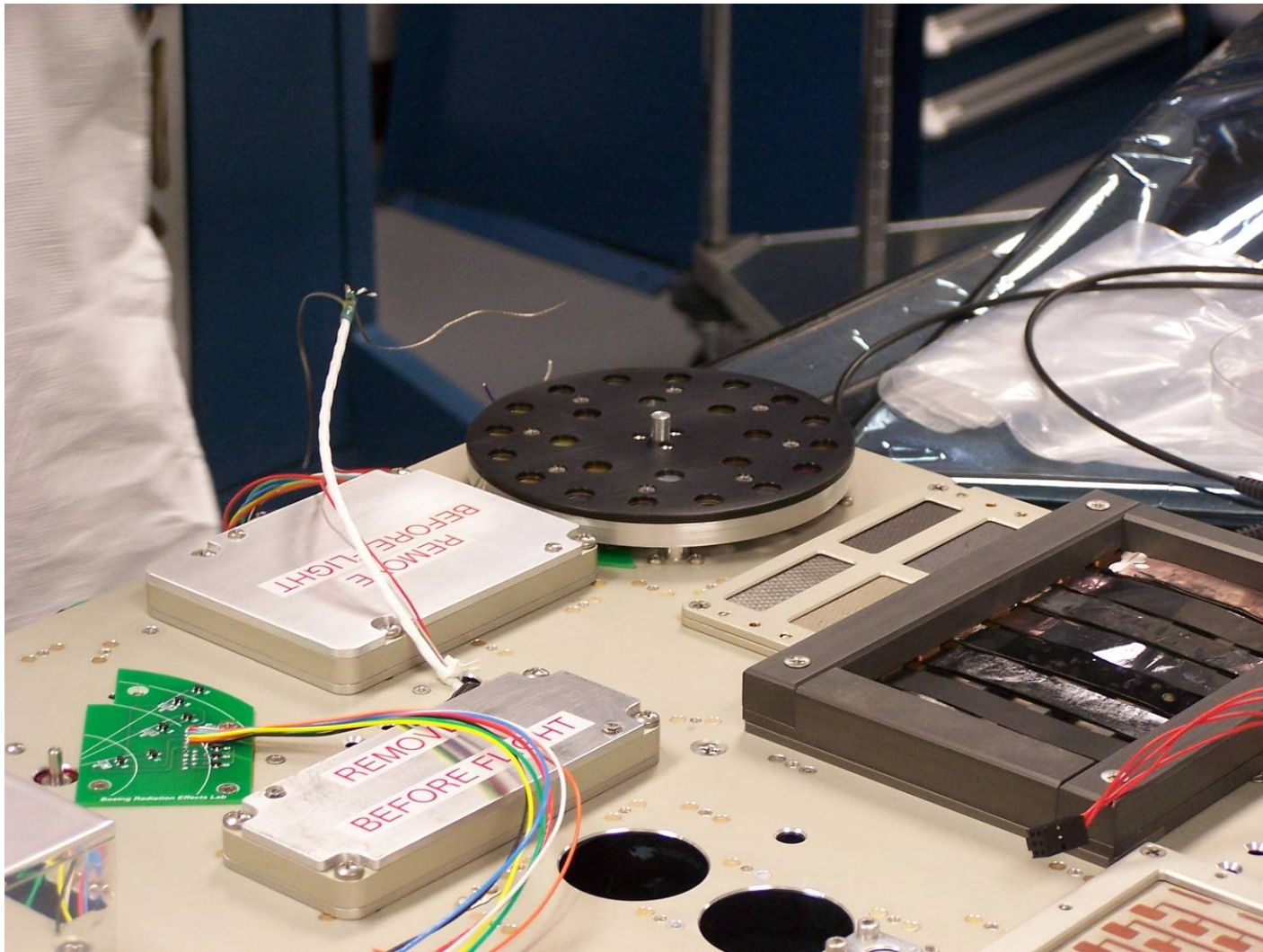


Andy Robb installing the Hall sensor boards

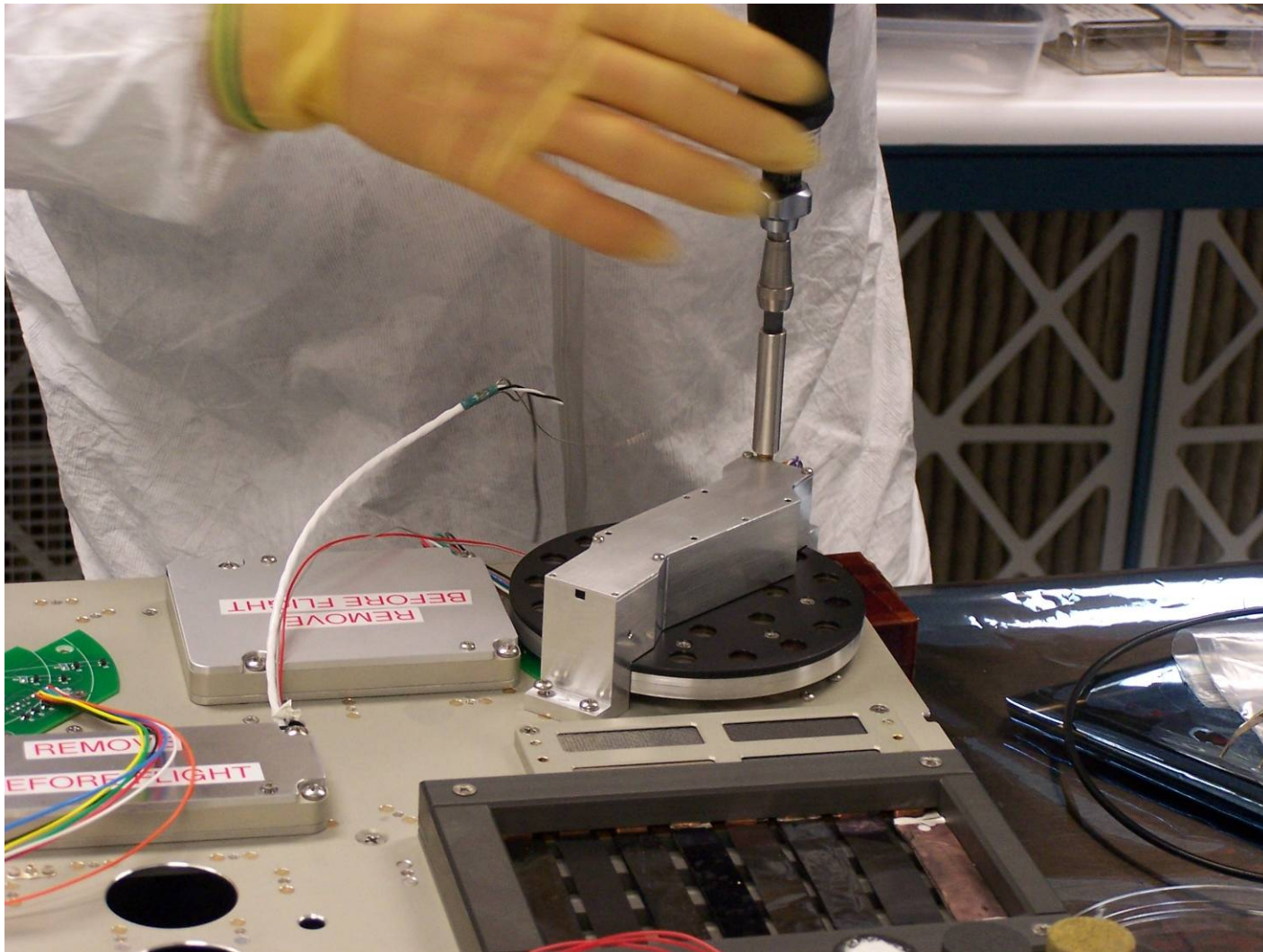


Gary and Jim install a Carousel

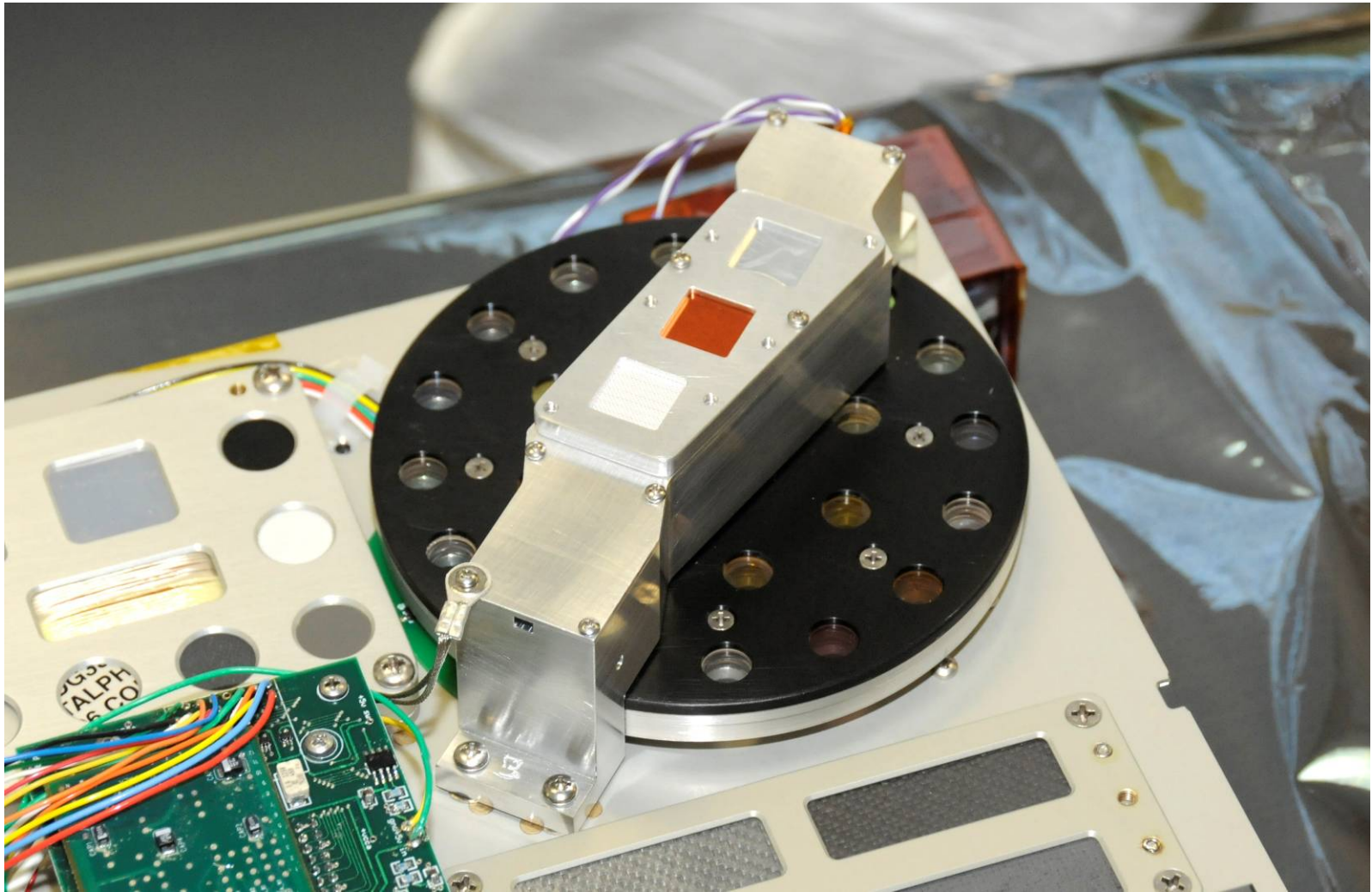




Carousel installed

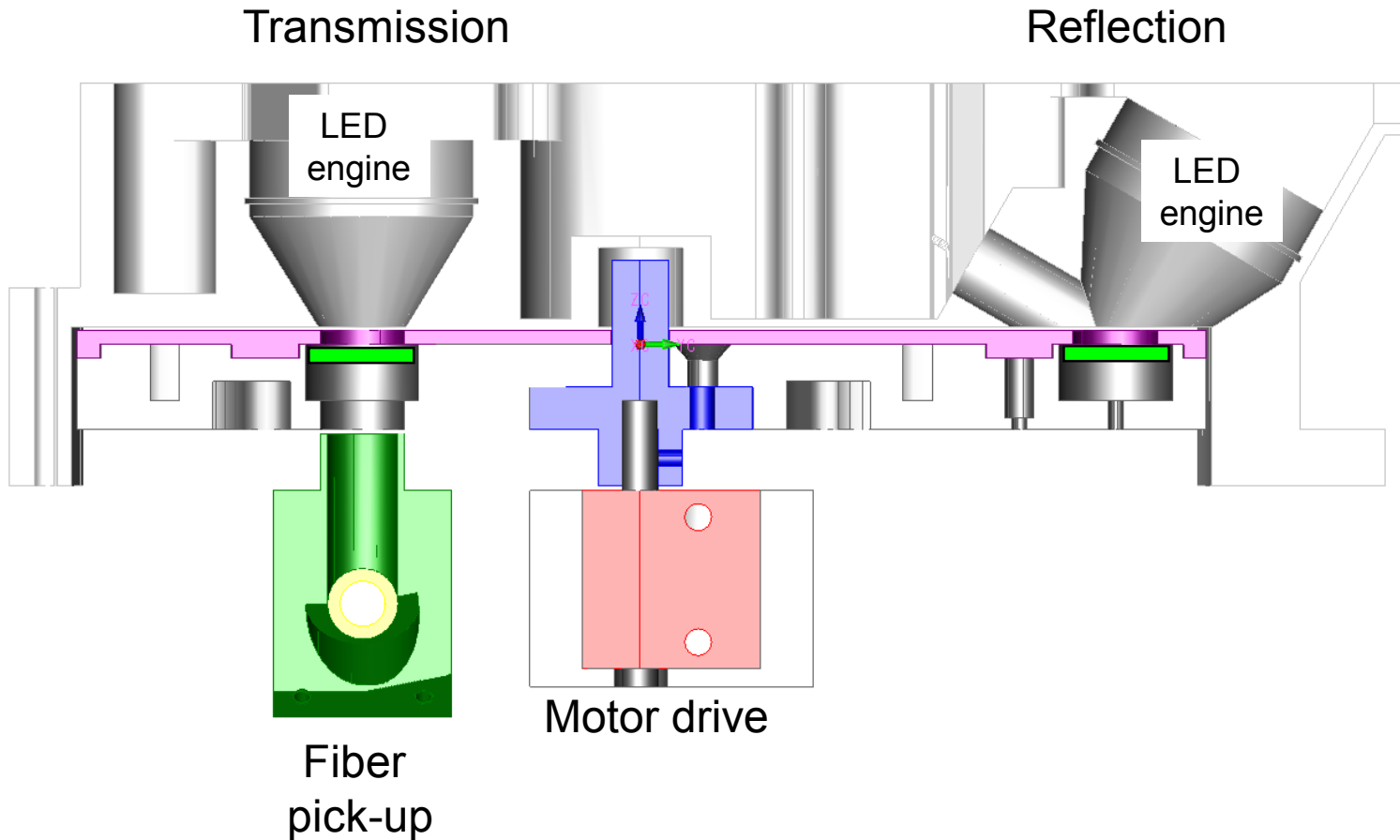


Light bar installed



Final configuration with passive exposure samples mounted on top surface of light bar

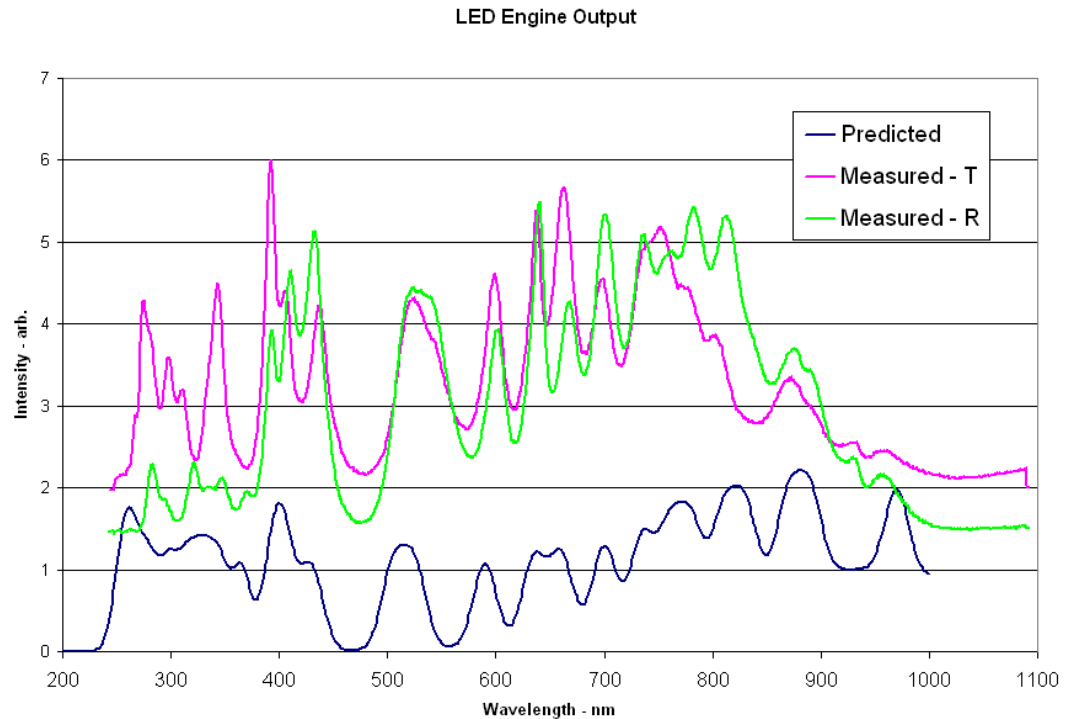
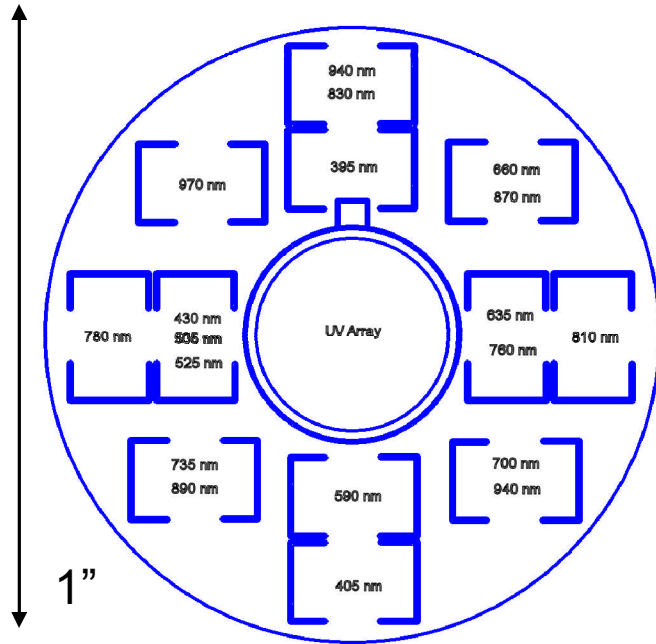
Cross Section view of Carousel and Light Bar



NSMMS 6-22-09



LED Light Engines



The Light Engine is fabricated from smd devices for discrete wavelengths
 UV array is a TO-100 package with sources at 255, 265, 280, 298, 315, 330, 345, and 365 nm.



Sample Description

Sample format

0.5" diameter

0.001" to 0.125" thick

Samples types

bare fused silica

magnesium fluoride

AR coatings on fused Silica

Al_2O_3 on fused Silica, ZrO_2

SiO_2 on ZrO_2

ZnSe/ThF_4 high reflector

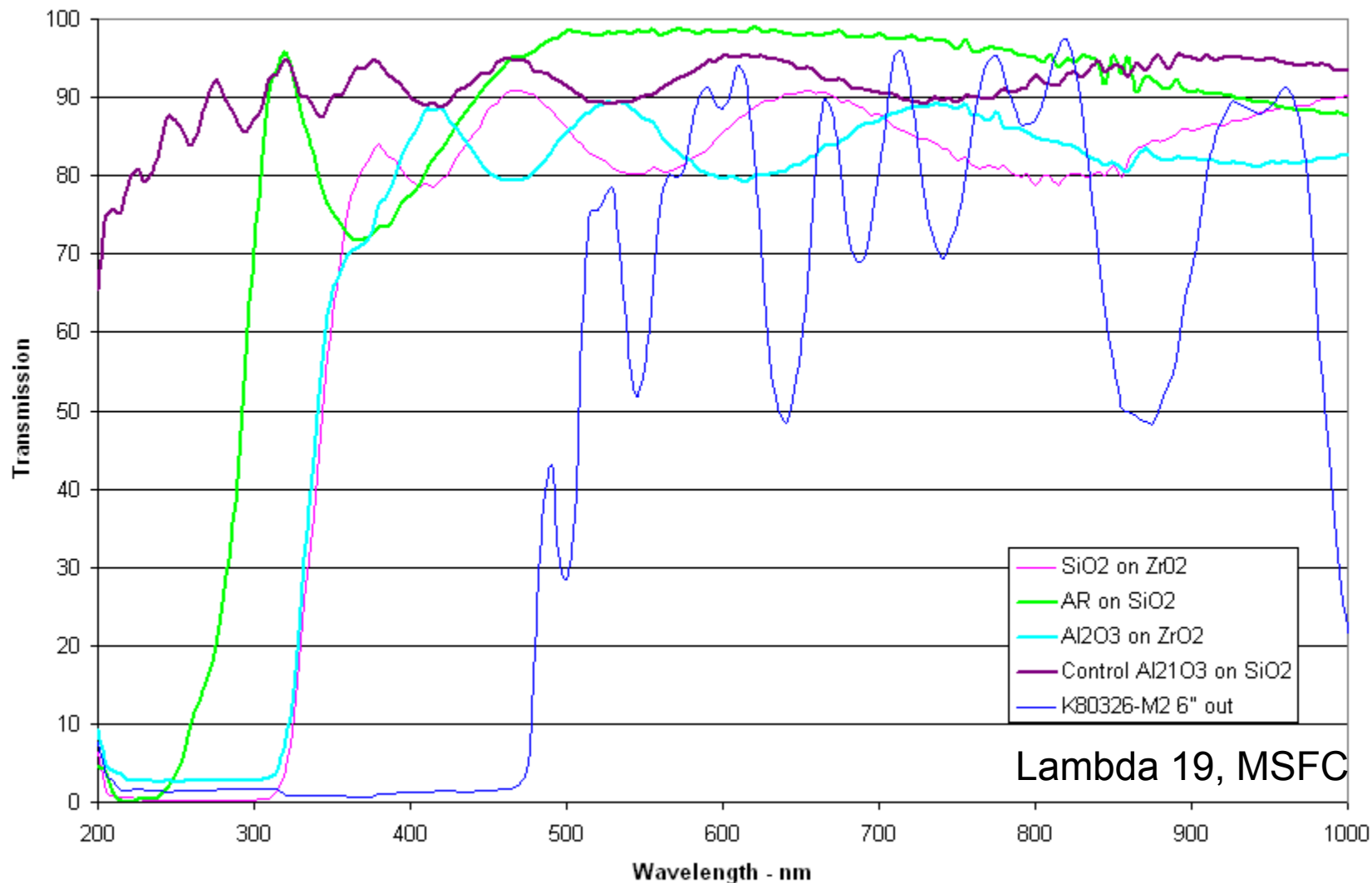
AZ Technology White

AZ Technology Black

...numerous other customer samples

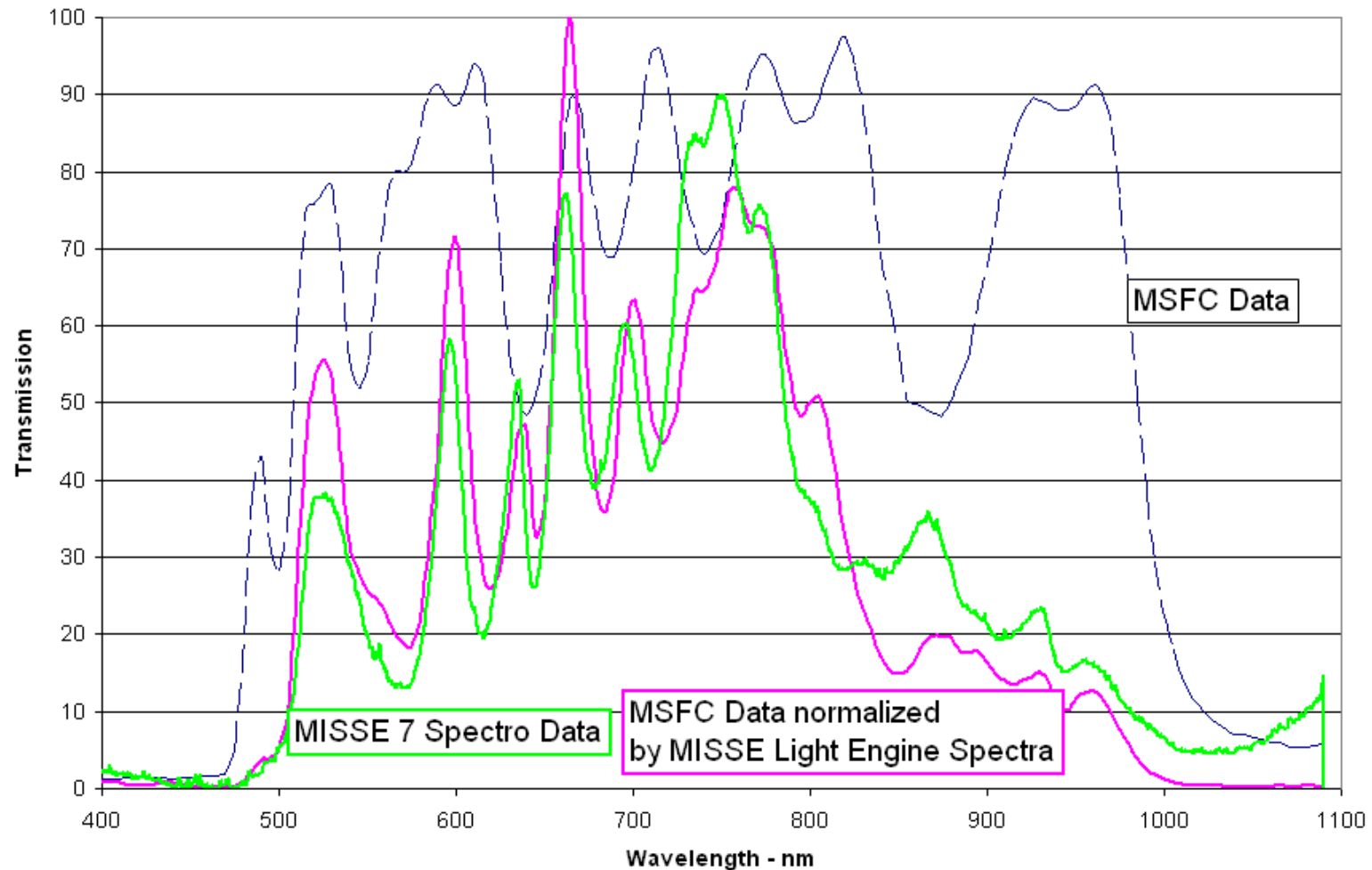


Transmission Spectra of Optical Coating Samples

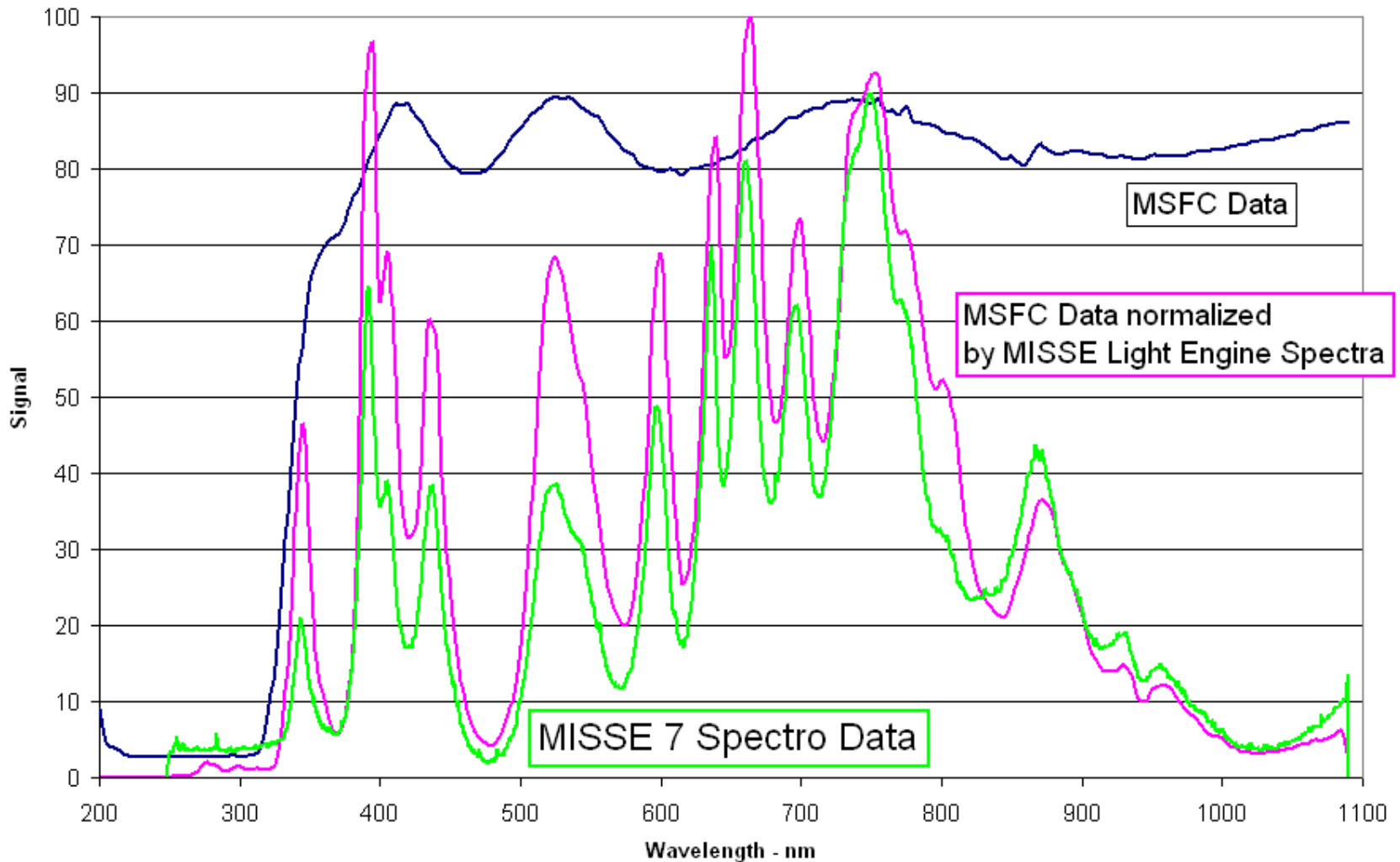


Spectra of High Reflectance Coatings

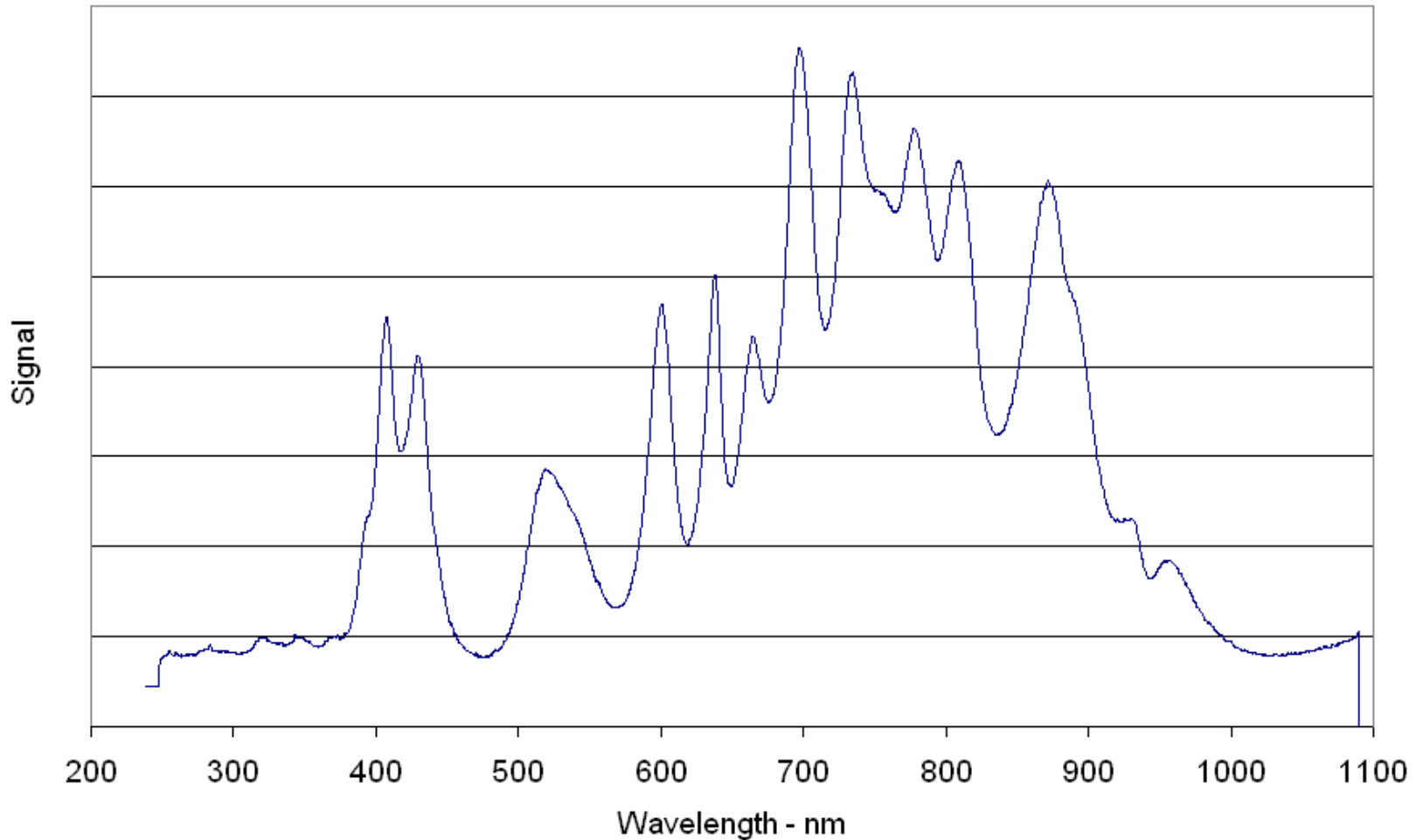
ZnSe/ThF4 HR Coatings on Silica



Spectra of Al₂O₃ on ZrO₂ Samples



Reflection Spectra of AZ Technology White



Summary

- The MISSE 7 spectrometers are a significant step forward
 - Miniaturization
 - Low power consumption
 - Speed
 - Capability appears to be very good
- Data on the ground matches predictions fairly well
 - some variation in amplitudes
 - Nonuniform illumination probably responsible
 - Data is reproducible
 - Measurement of shielded control samples in sequence may provide adequate baseline
- Specific sample designs chosen which may enhance sensitivity to low level contamination
- Launch is later this year!

MISSE 7 is the right platform on which to try a new instrument design and some customized samples

